

# Pulse Dance Company

## Handbook 2011-2012

### Guidelines and Policies

**PULSE HISTORY:** Pulse Dance Company( formerly called "Full-FX") began nearly 19 years ago because of the passion of 10 students who loved to dance. Over a 10 year span, our dancers, parents, and instructors traveled to numerous dance conventions, competitions, and Nationals from Las Vegas, Minneapolis, NY, NJ, and all over New England. These were great experiences as our dancers had the opportunity to train with renowned master teachers and they also received numerous Gold Medals and National titles along the way. The company grew and went on to develop many technically trained students; some, who have gone on to dance at a professional level or become dance teachers themselves.

Due to the high travel and competition expenses involved the dance company began to spend more time performing as opposed to competing. In response to this, we created "Pulse Dance Company" in September 2005. A new name and a new focus that places an emphasis on performing but still attends at least two competitions annually.

### WHAT IS PULSE DANCE COMPANY?

Some students choose to make dance their primary extra-curricular activity and they participate in dance at a very high level. These are the members of our youth and teen performing Dance Company "Pulse".

The focus of the Company is to provide an opportunity for the serious and experienced dance student to broaden their dance training and grow in performance skills. Pulse Dance company is not an enrollment in "extra dance class", it is an endeavor that is akin to being on a school sport team or cheering squad, and it requires a sincere commitment.

Each season currently enrolled students who exhibit dedication, attitude and proficiency are accepted into the company through class evaluations by teacher invitation. For dancers new to the studio we hold an interview/audition. Pulse dancers represent the dance studio at benefits, numerous local venues and dance competitions. Pulse Dance Company is directed by Susan Cloutier. The faculty at Studio for the Living Arts DanceCenter collaboratively produces all Pulse choreography for each new dance season.

Pulse Dance Company functions as both a performance group and a competitive team for students age 8-18. Our dancers have also learned the value of community service through annual performances to benefit Toys for Tots, Bruce Roberts Fund, the Autism Society of Maine and other community service events in the area. Through competition, our dancers are exposed to several different dance styles, new choreography, and the chance to perform and be critiqued by a panel of judges. The following is a list of the 2011-2012 guidelines & expectations that will help you make an informed decision about participation in the Company.

### COMMITMENT AND CONDUCT:

It is important for all Company members, prospective members, and their parents to understand what is involved in being a member of the Company. Pulse membership is a yearlong commitment beginning with pre-season choreography workshops which are held during first week/weekend in Sept. (after Labor Day), and ending with the following year's recital in June.

Our most important rule: RESPECT. Proper respect for the director, faculty, class curriculum and fellow students is expected of all dancers and parents. Every student should behave in a disciplined, responsible manner both on at the studio and at offsite performances. The studio reserves the right to suspend or dismiss any student whose attitude, attendance or conduct is found to be unsatisfactory.

### ATTENDANCE:

Attending all Pulse classes is mandatory and habitual unexcused absences will cause the dancer to be removed from the company. Pulse students need to commit to making class attendance and performances a priority over all other extracurricular activities. Acceptance to Pulse requires commitment and sacrifice. It is difficult if not impossible to maintain an equally demanding schedule as part of a sports team, cheering squad, drama club, or other extracurricular activities *and* commit to dance at this level.

Good attendance is essential for advancement and dancers are expected to attend 90% of their classes. Pulse students are expected to attend classes unless they are contagiously ill. If the dancer has an injury which prevents participation, we would like for him/her to sit on the side and observe. By observing, you stay connected to the company and get a sense of what to expect when you are able to dance again.

If a student misses the last rehearsal before a performance where any new spacing or changed choreography is presented, the student may not perform at that next performance/competition as they would not be familiar with the new material. Dancers must commit time to practicing routines and improving flexibility at home. If a class is missed, it is the student's responsibility to catch up prior to the next practice.

If you are unable to commit financially, and/or you are involved in outside activities which will conflict with weekly dance classes and additional rehearsal schedules and performances, we strongly suggest you reconsider joining the group and continue to dance at a more recreational level. We have many classes to choose from on our weekly schedule that meet just once a week.

### **PULSE DANCE TRAINING/CLASSES:**

Depending on the dancer's level/experience, we offer performing opportunities in the following disciplines: jazz, tap, hip-hop, ballet, and lyrical. Each discipline of dance you wish to perform in requires weekly technical training/enrollment in that class at the studio. All Pulse dancers are required to study ballet with the exception of "Hip-Hop or Tap only" Pulse dancers.

In order to learn and rehearse the actual Pulse performance choreography, we calculate 30 minutes a week for class rehearsal time throughout the season for each discipline you perform.

### **TUITION:**

To determine tuition costs, take the hourly total of your weekly classes then refer to our current Brochure under "Fee Schedule" for your monthly tuition rate. Please consult the "Pulse Registration Form" online for enrollment in both regular and Pulse classes.

### **PARENT'S FINANCIAL COMMITMENTS:**

Parents of prospective members should recognize that participation in dance at this level involves additional financial commitments. Company members typically choose to attend more classes and perform more dances in our recital, which naturally results in more costume fees than non-Company dancers. Other costs include required black jazz pants, shorts, and black leotard (tap/jazz/lyrical dancers only) performance makeup, specific hair/jewelry accessories, specific tights, specific shoe expenses, and optional Pulse Dance Co. jacket. We work very hard to keep all of these costs as low as possible. Order forms for these items are distributed in September.

**COSTUMES:** Pulse Performance costumes are ordered in October/November. Dancers will need to make a 50% deposit on each costume at that time, and the balance will be due upon shipment date in December or January. We do our very best to make costume costs affordable. Costume amounts will vary from year to year and can be anywhere from \$45 to \$65. We will notify the dancers once the costumes are selected.

Pulse costume accessories could include hats, gloves, tights, and props. If applicable, these fees will be priced out and added to Pulse costume fees.

Company students who elect to perform with their regular dance class in the June recital will also need to order a costume for that class in January. (Please consult our brochure for recital costume fees).

**SHOES:** All Pulse shoes are ordered by the studio as they all need to be the same style/shade. **Some competition dances will require shoes other than the regular class shoe.**

**MAKE-UP** For performance make-up, dancers will need to purchase foundation, blush, eyeliner, and mascara of their choice. Lipstick is ordered by the studio. Cost is approximately \$10-\$12.

### **PULSE PERFORMANCE CHOREOGRAPHY**

For learning and rehearsing each performance/competition piece we base a seasonal 30 minutes a week of class time for most pieces. We hold a mandatory pre-season choreography workshop for each Pulse discipline performed. During the workshops, Pulse dancers are taught the beginnings of the new year's performance choreography.

Choreography Workshop rehearsal cost is \$22 per dancer, per number, due upon registration. *(These classes are held Sept. 6-10, 2011. Dancers will receive the preseason schedule by email in August.)*

For teaching and rehearsing the remainder of each piece following preseason workshops, the faculty meets with the dancers in weekly 15 to 30 minute increments following their technique class. Please note that some rehearsals may be held during weeknights that are *not* your normal regularly scheduled night for dance class or they may also be held on weekends. If you are involved in numerous activities such as sports, cheerleading, drama, etc., you should not consider the dance company as there will most definitely be scheduling conflicts throughout the season. For budgeting purposes, please consult the Pulse schedule for calculating choreography times/costs.

All choreography is the sole property of Studio for the Living Arts DanceCenter, Inc. Company members or former members may not perform routines outside of the studio without permission from the director.

**IMPORTANT NOTE REGARDING CHOREOGRAPHY:** Company members may not post Pulse performance videos on youtube, facebook or any social network without permission from the Director.

## **PULSE OPPORTUNITIES:**

### **JAZZ**

***There are 4 Pulse Jazz levels.***

Youth I and II (approx. ages 8 -11)

Junior (approx. ages 12 +)

\*Senior (teens)

\*Advanced (teens)      *\*may be combined*

### **TAP**

**There are 3 Pulse Tap Levels**

Youth (approx. age 8 -10)

Junior (approx. ages 11 +)

Senior (teens)

### **HIP-HOP**

**There are 2 Pulse Hip-Hop Levels**

Junior (approx. ages 11 +)

Senior Advanced (teens approx. age 13+)

### **PULSE BALLET ENSEMBLE**

There are 2 Ballet Ensembles Levels . Intermediate and Advanced Dancers are selected at the end of each dance season (for the next year's repertoire) through teacher invitation.

### **LYRICAL PULSE**

Pulse production number offered.

### **CONTEMPORARY**

***There are 3 Pulse Jazz levels.***

Junior (approx. ages 12 +)

Senior (teens)

Advanced (teens)

## ***Some basic technical requirement guidelines:***

**All Levels:** company members need a minimum of 3 years dance experience.

**Junior level Tap Pulse** Positive attitude, excellent stage presence, able to execute basic time steps, has been introduced to wings and pick-up steps.

**Lyrical Pulse:** Positive attitude, excellent stage presence, clean double pirouette and attitude turns, excellent leaps, turning leaps, excellent flexibility, high extensions, excellent arm control and placement.

**Senior Level Tap** Positive attitude, excellent stage presence, able to execute advanced time steps, wings and pick up steps. Strong ability to execute steps and syncopated rhythms. Excellent sound articulation.

**Advanced Level Teen Jazz, Lyrical:** Can execute complex steps. Can execute grand jetes, double-triple pirouettes, fouettes, axel turns and other advanced tricks. Performances of all routines must be exceptional.

**Hip-Hop all Levels:** Positive attitude, excellent stage presence and style. Show progress in mastering basic skills taught during class, such as head/shoulder/rib/hip isolations, spotting, attention to arms/hands, and increasing flexibility and strength.

**YOUTH Jazz Levels:** The Youth Pulse level is available for dancers 8 yrs and over. Positive attitude, good stage presence, class focus is on perfecting the basics with introductions to single pirouettes and single chaine turns with spotting, basic leaps and kicks, pique turns, and pas de bourree. Dancers will strengthen/expanding dance technique so that it can be executed in a manner that is technically correct.

**YOUTH Tap Level:** Dancers need to have proper execution and articulation of basic tap steps. Dancers will learn and perform classic and contemporary tap repertory geared towards their skills. Good stage presence, and confidence required.

**Junior level Jazz:** Must have mastered a single pirouette, proper form and body placement; spotting techniques and working on mastering double pirouettes. Emphasis on flexibility including R/L splits & more challenging jumps & leaps. Concentrating on pointing feet during all moves. Performing routines with much style & personality.

The level ages are used as a guideline, depending on ability, musicality, technique, maturity, confidence and performance quality. Level placement is determined by the instructor. In some cases we may hold placement classes. We believe that the foundations of dance should be learned in a particular order, and although we challenge our dancers to move forward with more difficult steps, we first need to make sure that our dancers master the basics.

## **PERFORMING OPPORTUNITIES:**

There are many performing opportunities open to the company. Some of our past performances have included the Old Port Festival, Maine Mall, Cumberland Fair, Barbara Bush Children's Hospital, Merrill Auditorium Reopening Celebration, Monument Square Outdoor Summer performances, Toys for Tots Benefit, Funtown, and numerous Dance Competitions. Dancers must make these performances a priority over all other outside activities and dancers are expected to attend all performances. We also believe community service is important. Everyone should know they can make a difference! With that in mind, the studio performs and hosts local charitable performances.

## **DANCE COMPETITIONS:**

In the past fifteen years, the dance world has changed immensely. Dance competitions and conventions have become a major force in the dance world, and we feel that when handled correctly without undue pressure, competitions are a fun and exciting way for the dancers to showcase their abilities and hard work, to be educated by seeing other top-level students, and to become friends with well-known teachers, performers, and choreographers.

Pulse typically participates in at least two competitions per dance year (***we offer optional competitions for solos/duos/trios and small extra group pieces***). We do not measure our success in terms of trophies. Our dancers and teachers have earned many of them through the years but we still believe success is best measured by being your own personal best. Competitions are intended to be a learning experience for students to improve their own ability, to perform in front of judges and a live audience, and to see other students perform of close age and ability. Competitions give us tangible landmarks to measure our growth. When our studio competes, our focus is not just on "winning", it is on learning and loving to dance correctly.

For the 2011-2012 season we will aim to attend at least one competition in the Portland area, and one overnight competition/convention. A dance competition/convention is a weekend-long event. It usually is held at a hotel. The students take classes from about 9AM to 3PM, with a few breaks in between. They take classes in many different dance styles, and learn from master instructors from around the country. Another day is the actual competition, (competing, then the awards ceremony). We would like to select a convention that is held in the NH or MA area. In addition to the Regional Competition entry fees, dance workshop fees are approximately \$100 per dancer and they cover the full day of dance classes. All competition information will be sent out as soon as it becomes available.

In fairness to all of the dancers, Regional Competition participation is a requirement. Parents are responsible for all fees involved. Each number that is entered in the competition requires a per student entry fee of approximately \$30 per number. (Solos, duos and trio entry fees are higher and range anywhere from \$55 to \$75 per dancer per entry).

Competitions require non-refundable payments for these entry fees 30 days prior to the event. (We do not always enter all Pulse numbers for competition as some may not yet be performance ready). The Competition date is arranged a minimum of 10 weeks prior to the event; therefore the studio must be notified in writing that far in advance if you are not able to participate due to any important family/school commitment. Choosing not to attend a competition or electing to not attend in lieu of participation of another extracurricular activity will result in dismissal.

When attending a competition, dancers should leave the entire day open. The specific competition times for each competition are not posted until the week before the competition.

***Most competitions begin at 9am and we ask our dancers stay and support their teammates once their own numbers have been performed.***

Dancers also attend the Awards ceremony which is normally held at the end of the day. Awards can be held as late as 7 or 8pm. Attending National Competitions can be an option if we qualify and if there is sufficient interest. Nationals are held over the summer and they are usually held at a hotel or resort in the New England area. To keep your costs down we usually send just one or two faculty members from the studio to accompany our dancers to all Regional Competitions. This may not be your specific teacher, so if parents or students that have questions about the event, please be sure to speak with your teacher (or the director) ahead of time.

## **FUNDRAISING:**

Pulse Dance company has an established fundraising committee that is organized and run by the parents (completely separate from the studio). All fundraising ideas must be preapproved by the Director. Because each family has various levels of need for financial assistance, being involved with fundraising is not mandatory.

### **The fundraising committee has two separate accounts:**

***General fund account:*** Small fundraising proceeds (such as CLYNK bottle account proceeds) are held here and funds are allocated and used by the treasurer for purchasing any materials, supplies, postage, advertising needs for Pulse fundraising projects.

***Individual Fundraising Account:*** If a family elects to participate in fundraising, proceeds are deposited into the student's account with SLADC by the fundraising treasurer and funds may be used to offset dance company expenses (Pulse costumes/shoes/accessories, training, convention or competition fees, etc.). Fundraising proceeds are not distributed as cash for personal or specific use.

## COMMUNICATION:

We try to schedule performing events well in advance, and we will get these dates to you as soon as they are finalized. If they change for any reason you will be notified by email. Dancers and parents will need to check their e-mails on a regular basis for updates and changes. Email is our major form of communication. It is imperative that we have the dancer's and parents email addresses and any changes to your email address that occur during the year. Please check your email DAILY! If you do not have email, or you are having problems with your computer, it is your responsibility to check in to the office for updated information. If you are allowed to accept email at your work email address, include that as well. Each dancer should keep a datebook/calendar in their dance bag and bring it to every class to make notes of upcoming events, rehearsals etc. **All publicity and offsite performance communications for the Company are initiated and conducted by the SLADC director. Please do not contact any newspapers, sponsors or hosts of performance events. Please do not approach or speak with the judges when attending a competition.**

Please do not email SLADC faculty directly or through facebook or other social networks unless the conversation is initiated by the faculty member. All correspondence should be emailed to studiofortheivingarts@yahoo.com

## COMPETITION SOLO / DUO / TRIO/SMALL GROUP PROGRAM

Requests for competition solos, duos, trios , and small groups must be made in writing or e-mail to the Director no later than August 27, 2011. Dancers must be intermediate II + levels only , and experienced performers with a high level of confidence. A dancer's skill level, overall attitude, attendance, discipline to make time for self practices, and emotional maturity will all be considered.

**WHAT** A solo, duo, trio or small group is a special routine choreographed for Pulse dancers who have worked hard, progressed accordingly and have the dedication , skill , and confidence required. All solo, duo, trio and small group choreography takes place during private lessons and separate from regular classes. These routines are developed and taught specifically so that they can be performed at competitions. Some extra pieces may also be performed at community performances. Regular class curriculum must take priority over private lessons. *All Pulse extra pieces will be performed at all competitions, and at our annual "Pulse Performs" show. We cannot guarantee that all extra Pulse solos, duos, trios or small groups will be performed at the June recital.*

**WHY** Performing a solo, duo or trio is a very rewarding experience. The amount of extra time you will be practicing will enhance your dance technique. and your extra stage time will grow your performance skills. A solo, duo , trio or small group can provide many opportunities for dancers to build self-confidence through goal setting and performance.

**CHOREOGRAPHY/MUSIC SELECTION** All routines are choreographed by instructors of SLADC. Instructors are responsible for music and choreography choices. If a dancer has a special idea it will be considered by the instructor. All routines will be 2 to 3 minutes in length.

**PRACTICE / SCHEDULES** All solos, duos and trios require a minimum of 5 hours with the instructor and at least 3 hours of self practice time before entering into competition. Self practice time may be scheduled at the studio if necessary and dancers will be allowed to reserve studio space at no cost when rooms are not being used by classes.

**CHOREOGRAPHY FEE** :This amount covers the choreographer's time to select and edit music, select costume and choreograph the piece. This fee does not include any lesson time. The choreography fee is due prior to the first private lesson. **Check is payable to the choreographer.** (For duets, and trios you split the cost).

1-3 Students—\$150.00 per routine

4+ Students—\$50.00 per person, per routine

**PRIVATE LESSON FEES:** Once the piece is choreographed and ready to be taught, Private Lessons are scheduled, usually one month in advance. For budgeting purposes, dancers are scheduled and billed a total minimum of 5 hours (maximum of 8 hours) of private lessons. This includes some short sessions prior to competition after the piece has been taught, along with meetings to review competition critiques with the instructor or director following a competition.

All private lesson fees should be paid to SLADC. The dancer's minimum 5 hours of private lesson fees may be paid in full at the first private lesson or they may be paid at each class. Private lesson fees that are unpaid result in the instructor not being paid. Instructors reserve the right to refuse continuation of private lessons until private fees are current.

**Tuition payments for regular weekly classes must be current prior to applying any payments toward private lesson fees. If your regular tuition payments are behind, any payments received are applied to past due tuition amounts first.**

## PRIVATE CLASS RATES FOR SOLOS, DUOS, TRIOS, SMALL GROUPS

Solos & Duos 60 mins \$60.00 (divided among the dancers)

Trios: 60 mins \$75.00 (divided among the dancers)

Small Groups ( 4+) 60 mins \$85.00 (divided among the dancers)

**COSTUME AND ENTRY FEES FOR SOLOS, DUOS, TRIOS, SMALL GROUPS:**

Dancers will each need a costume which could range from \$65-\$75. Costumes are ordered in the Fall. Special tights and shoes may also be needed. Competition entry fees are due approximately six weeks prior to competition. Entry fees for solos, duos, trios can be anywhere from \$35-\$85 per dancer for each competition. Small Group comp. entry fees are approximately \$35 per dancer.

- Make sure to arrive 10-15 minutes BEFORE your scheduled private lesson time for warm-up and stretch on your own.
- It is expected that the dancer(s) self practice and know what they have been taught BEFORE their next rehearsal time. The instructor will not teach the next section of choreography if first section is not remembered.
- Dancers are committed to pre-scheduled private lesson times and any "no-shows" will be charged for the scheduled class unless 24 hour cancellation has been received by the student and confirmed with the Choreographer.
- Please do not ask the teacher to run your dance during regular group class times. Please keep in mind we are a team and group dances take priority over any solos, duets or trios.